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Foreign policy debate heats up in Greece

Greek leader says KAL jet was U.S. spy

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, in a speech to members of his Socialist party, said the South Korean jetliner shot down by a Soviet fighter last year was spying for the United States.

(In Washington, State Department spokesman Alan Romberg said Mr. Papandreou's charge "stands in stark contrast to the findings of the international community and appears to be a blatant replay of the Soviet cover story to deflect responsibility for its action.

("There is not the slightest evidence for a claim of a 'spy' mission and any such claim can only be termed irresponsible," Mr. Romberg said. "The KAL tragedy was thoroughly investigated by the International Civil Aviation Organization which gave no support to the Soviet disinformation effort.

("In fact, ICAO postulated after a thorough investigation that KAL 007 was off course in Soviet airspace due to a navigational error of some kind by the pilot. The principal issue is that the Soviets shot down an unarmed civilian airliner without positively identifying it, without warning, and without justification, killing 269 innocent civilians."

(Mr. Romberg said the government was waiting for "official clarification" of Prime Minister Papandreou's statement. "Any such statement, however, would be outrageous and demonstrate a willful disregard of the facts," he said.)

Mr. Papandreou, speaking Wednesday to members of Parliament who represent his Panhellenic Socialist Movement, defended his government's differences with its NATO allies on the airliner incident and economic sanctions against Poland.

"The world is now convinced the jumbo jet was on a spy mission for the CIA and that it really did violate Soviet airspace for intelligence-gathering pur-



Greek Premier Andreas Papandreou

UPI

poses. We were the only ones who didn't get hysterical," he said.

Mr. Papandreou did not put forward any evidence that the plane was on a spy mission, but government spokesman Dimitri Maroudas told reporters yesterday that the premier's statement was made on the basis of reports in the U.S. and British press.

A Soviet warplane shot down the Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 over Soviet territory last Sept. 1, and 269 people were killed. The Soviet Union has charged that the plane was on a spy mission, but the United States and South Korea strongly deny the charge.

Mr. Papandreou said Greece had refused to approve sanctions against Poland because "the great danger of a nuclear holocaust demands that our every move should serve the cause of peace."

"We condemned the military regime in Poland, but we stressed there should be no sanctions. They brought tension and escalation of the Cold War, with unforeseeable consequences," he said.

Miles Cunningham also contributed to this article